

PART V

CROPS

Major Crops

Chelan County is the most specialized orchard area in Washington. Nearly two-thirds of the total of 36,250 acres of harvested cropland is in orchards and vineyards for growing fruit, nuts and grapes. These tree and vine crops cover 23,065 acres, or about 64 percent of all the harvested cropland. In 1954 Chelan ranked second among all counties of the United States in production of apples and was tenth in the value of fruits and nuts sold.

Minor or secondary crops of Chelan in 1954 were wheat (5,600 acres), alfalfa (4,170), oats and grain hay (2,000) and potatoes (250).

Crop Trends

The crop history of any farming region reflects economic changes to a large degree. A number of changes are apparent in the emphasis and acreages

Total Acres of Land Harvested, 1954:
36,250 acres

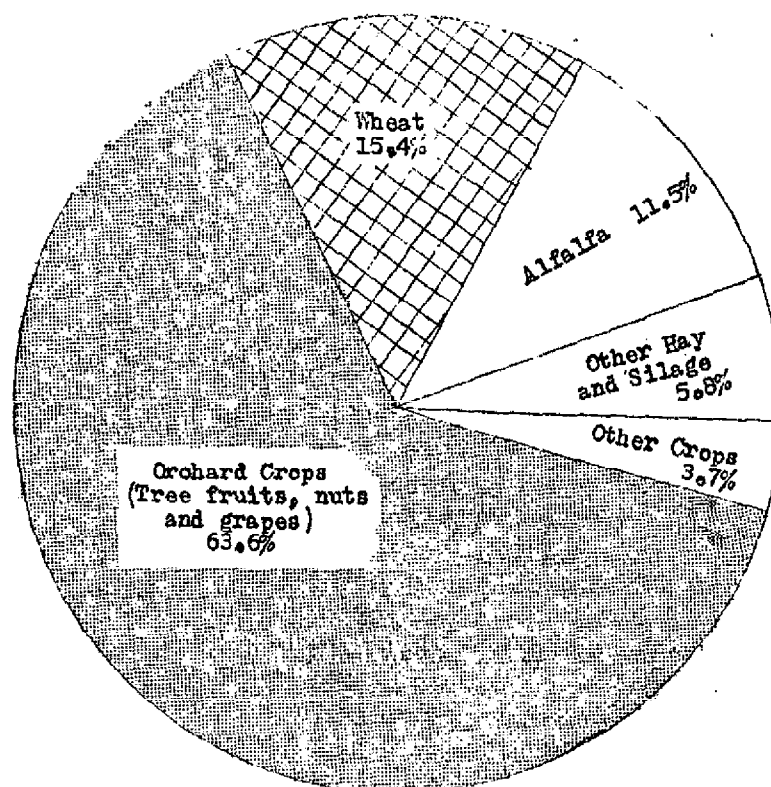


Figure 10.- Percent of Total Cropland in Leading Crops
Chelan County, 1954.
(Based on U.S. Census, Agriculture, 1954)

Chelan County farmers have given to leading crops. These show the influences of new market outlets and a tendency to specialize more and more in tree crops. Changes in crop patterns also result from farmer's experiments with various crops and types of farming for specific markets.

Since 1939, there have been several general trends in Chelan crop programs. Specialization in fruit is a continuing trend and the total orchard acreage has increased slowly from 21,800 acres to over 23,000 acres. Apple trees of all ages have increased from 897,500 trees in 1939 to 961,000 in 1954. Greatest increase has been in plantings of pears in which the total number of trees has gone up from 230,860 trees in 1939 to 358,650 in 1954. Grape vine plantings have increased over ten times those of 1939. Decreases have occurred in tree numbers of plums, apricots, walnuts and filberts. In field crops there have been small increases since 1939 in wheat, oats, barley, alfalfa hay and commercial vegetables. Acreages of potatoes, clover and timothy hay, rye and field corn have been on a downward trend. All land in harvested crops has increased from 34,000 acres in 1939 to 36,250 acres in 1954. More land has been brought under cultivation by use of irrigation systems and by extending new orchards and grain fields onto higher lands.

Tree Fruits, Nuts and Grapes

Chelan County is among the ten most important fruit counties of America and is second only to Yakima in Washington fruit production. Fruit growing and marketing dominates the county agricultural economy. It is practiced on 1,520 farms, or on about four-fifths of all the farm premises enumerated in the county. Fruits, nuts and grapes and other cash crops returned over \$26,595,000 to growers in 1954 and accounted for 95 percent of all products sold off farms. Chelan has the highest dependency on a single fruit crop--apples--of any other county either in Washington or the entire nation. Growers' sales of fruit are great enough to make Chelan the fourth ranking county of the state in value of all products sold off farms.

Based on numbers of trees and volume of production by weight, the tree crops include the following: apples (971,800 trees), pears (412,500), cherries (84,900), peaches (69,700), apricots (42,300), plums (4,070), walnuts (832) and filberts (380).

Apples

Apples are the chief crop and most valuable commodity sold in Chelan County. In 1954, there were 1,229 growers or farms with apple orchards exceeding 20 trees. There were 971,800 apple trees of all ages, the second largest number in the state by county areas. Bearing apple trees numbered 626,000 and they yielded 8,598,755 loose boxes, the second largest production in the state and in the United States by a county area.

Orchards contain six general varieties of apple trees. Growers prefer the Red Delicious variety in recent plantings. By 1954, nearly half of the commercial trees were Red Delicious followed by Winesap, 21 percent, Standard Delicious, 17, Golden Delicious, 6, Jonathan, 4, and Rome Beauty, 3. Recent plantings indicated a decrease of trees in the Standard Delicious, Jonathan

and Winesap varieties in favor of the more highly valued commercial varieties, Red Delicious and Golden Delicious. 1/

Since 1920, Chelan County apple orchards have been greatly improved by plantings of heavier producing trees, and production has been increased by better horticultural practices and harvesting methods. In 1954, there were less than half as many bearing apple trees as in 1920, but the 1954 harvest was over a third greater in volume and weight. 2/

Table 17.-Apples: Trees of Bearing Age and Production
Chelan County, 1900-1954.

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Apples (bushels and boxes)
1900	47,483	1899	27,353 bushels
1910	421,809	1909	543,757 bushels
1920	1,502,182	1919	6,300,380 bushels
1930	1,091,065	1929	8,314,053 bushels
1940	826,124	1939	6,267,425 bushels
1950	639,932	1949	8,598,755 loose boxes
1954	625,971 1/	1954	12,729,753 loose boxes

1/ In 1954 the Census enumerated only trees growing in orchards of 20 trees or more.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Apple orchards are concentrated on the lower slopes of three valleys. The largest concentration of apple trees and growers is in the Wenatchee Valley and on a benchland of the Columbia River south and west of Wenatchee. Known as the Wenatchee-Cashmere area it contains about 457,000 trees owned by 660 growers. Orchards average about 700 trees per grower. About one-eighth of all the apple trees in Washington are in this area. Integrated with this specialized apple region, centered on Wenatchee, is the orchard area of East Wenatchee in southwestern Douglas County which contains 238,000 trees.

The second important apple district is the Chelan Valley surrounding Chelan, Manson, Lakeside, Winesap and Azwell. The Manson irrigated district is a heavy producer. About 333,000 trees are grown here on 330 orchards which average nearly 1,000 trees per grower. The Manson irrigation district contains 224 growers who manage a total of 203,000 trees.

The third apple area is the Entiat Valley in the Entiat-Ardenvoir district. Concentrated here are 96,000 trees divided among 113 growers. The average orchard has 850 trees.

1/ The 1954 Fruit Tree Survey in North Central Washington, Washington Agric. Experiment Stations, Circular 270, Pullman, Washington 1955.

2/ Washington Tree Fruits, Bulletin, Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, USDA, AHS, and Washington State Dept. of Agric. Cooperating, 1952.

Pears

Pears are second in volume and value in the Chelan fruit growing industry. In 1954, there were 412,500 pear trees being grown on 940 fruit farms. Chelan was second to Yakima County in the state and ranked eighth among all American counties in trees and quantity of pears harvested. Over one-fifth of all the pear trees of Washington are in Chelan County. Recent plantings of pears have been large, raising the total number of trees by 45 percent since 1949.

Chelan pear growers specialize in two varieties. In 1954, Bartlett pear trees made up about 62 percent and D'Anjou 37 percent. The Bosc variety is of minor importance. New plantings and production have been planned primarily for the canning market at Yakima which prefers Bartletts.

Cherries

Cherries are the third most important tree fruit in Chelan County. In 1954, there were 84,900 cherry trees and the county ranked second in the state and 26th nationally in the total number of trees. In production it was second in the state and 16th in the nation. Growers prefer the more marketable sweet cherry varieties. About 97 percent of the trees are sweet cherries and 3 percent are sour cherries. Among the sweet cherry varieties, the Lambert leads at 51 percent followed by Bing 39, and Royal Anne 5. Cherry tree plantings have been heavy since 1945 in response to an expanded processing market and a nationwide fresh fruit market. This segment of the fruit industry was badly damaged in 1955 by a severe November freeze which killed many trees outright and injured most others to some extent.

Table 18.- Cherries: Trees of Bearing Age and Production
Chelan County, 1900-1954.

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of cherries (tons)
1900	2,017	1899	45
1910	16,447	1909	168
1920	23,693	1919	685
1930	20,944	1929	2,123
1940	43,247	1939	3,429
1950	24,989	1949	5,568
1954	61,000 1/	1954	3,253

1/ In 1954 the Census enumerated only trees growing in orchards of 20 trees or more.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Commercial cherry orchards are concentrated in the lower Wenatchee Valley, particularly south of Wenatchee. Sweet cherry tree numbers in the Wenatchee Valley and the Columbia River benchlands near the mouth of the Wenatchee River totaled about 64,000 in the 1954 Census. There were about 500 Wenatchee Valley farms growing sweet cherries in orchards of 20 trees or more. Cherries are found as a sideline on fruit farms growing apples, pears and peaches, and there are some specialized cherry orchards with over 1,000 trees.

Peaches

Peaches, with 69,700 trees, form another important commercial fruit crop of Chelan County. The county ranked third in Washington in peach production for 1954. While production was slightly down from previous years, orchardists have made heavy plantings of peaches since 1940. Peach growers have preferred two varieties. Elbertas make up 60 percent and Hales 25 percent of all peach trees. Peach growing has been decreasing slightly since peak production years in the 1920's and 30's. Recent plantings have raised the number of bearing trees and production since 1940.

Table 19.— Peaches: Trees of Bearing Age and Production
Chelan County, 1900-1954.

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Peaches (bushels and pounds)
1900	15,680	1889	14,952 bu.
1910	113,294	1909	5,866 bu.
1920	64,108	1919	179,599 bu.
1930	22,939	1929	68,511 bu.
1940	31,443	1939	105,061 bu.
1950	41,386	1949	4,550,602 lbs.
1954 1/	41,300	1954	3,395,312 lbs.

1/ In 1954 the Census enumerated only trees growing in orchards of 20 trees or more.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Peach trees, intermixed in blocks among other tree fruits, are mainly found in the Wenatchee, Entiat and Chelan Valleys. The Wenatchee area leads with 360 growers owning 26,000 trees. The lower valley and the Columbia River benchlands north and south of Wenatchee form a concentrated peach area with 23,000 trees. The Entiat Valley district has 80 growers with a total of about 7,000 trees. The Chelan-Manson-Azwell area has 65 growers with a total of approximately 8,000 trees.

Apricots

Chelan is the second most important apricot-growing county of Washington, with 51,000 trees in 1954. Apricot plantings have recently decreased and there is a downward trend of commercial production. Apricot trees of bearing age reached a peak of 77,000 in 1940, then declined to 40,000 by 1954. Apricot volume fell from 5,690,000 pounds in 1949 to 3,261,000 pounds in 1954. The decline in apricot growing has been caused by less profitable market outlets in home canning, commercial canning and fresh markets generally over the state.

Most of the apricots which are intermixed with other fruit trees are grown in the Wenatchee Valley and its adjacent Columbia River benchlands. The 1954 Census enumerated a total of 36,000 trees distributed on 400 fruit farms in this area. The Chelan Valley contained about 2,000 trees and the Entiat area 1,500.

Plums and Prunes

Of earlier importance in Chelan horticulture, plums and prunes have decreased to a minor status in recent years. From 1900 to 1920 there were over 8,000 bearing trees producing over 750 tons per year. By 1954 bearing trees were down to 3,000 and only 900 young trees have been planted recently. Annual harvest is down to 280 tons. Being less profitable than other tree fruits, plums and prunes have been removed in many orchards and replaced by other species such as apples and pears. Plums and prunes are mainly found in the Wenatchee Valley where there are about 2,800 bearing trees on 140 farms. The remainder of about 200 trees are in the Entiat Valley.

Nuts and Grapes

Nut tree orchards and grape vineyards are of minor importance. In 1954 there were 180 farms with walnut trees and 66 with filberts. Nearly 12,000 pounds of walnuts and 2,400 pounds of filberts were harvested in 1954, mainly for local use. Nut tree horticulture has declined, and numbers of trees and nut production was over one-third lower than in 1949. Chelan County ranks third in the state in walnuts harvested and fourteenth in filberts.

Grape vineyards, in contrast to nut orchards, have been increasing. New processor and fresh market outlets for Concord variety grapes have encouraged an increase in growers, vines planted and production. Grape production reached 857,000 pounds in 1954, compared with 271,000 pounds in 1949, fifth highest in the state.

Vine culture is mainly located in the middle section of the Wenatchee Valley centered at Cashmere. There were 107 growers in the Wenatchee Valley who had a total of 34,500 grape vines in 1954. There were 23 growers and 12,000 vines in the Chelan Valley and 33 vineyards and 800 vines in the Entiat Valley.

Small Grains: Wheat, Barley, Oats and Rye

Small grains, led by wheat are the most important cash field crops of Chelan County. Cash grain operations number only 25 to 30 farms and the total commercial sale of grain is comparatively minor in the county's agricultural economy. Chelan ranks only 18th in the state as a wheat producer.

In recent years wheat has been grown for farm use and commercial sale in larger volume than in the pre-war years. Higher prices and profits in wheat started an uptrend in acreage and production. From low acreages of production in 1942 and 1943 of 500 to 700 acres and 12,000 to 15,000 bushels, the wheat crop reached a peak of 7,200 acres and a harvest of 145,600 bushels in 1953. Since 1953 there has been a downward trend. About two-thirds of the wheat is of the winter type, sown in the early fall to take advantage of the wet season. In 1954 about 350 acres of wheat was grown on irrigated land and the remaining 4,400 was on sloping dryland sites generally too dry for fruit trees. Growers favor two wheat varieties, Elmar, a soft wheat, accounting for 49 percent and Turkey, a hard wheat, for 14.8 percent.

Table 20.- Varieties of Wheat Grown
in Chelan County, 1955.

Classes and Varieties of Wheat	Production (Bushels)	Percent of Total Crop
<u>White Club Wheats</u>		
Elmar-----	33,100	49.0
Hymar-----	2,900	4.3
<u>Common-White Wheats</u>		
Baart-----	9,600	14.2
Idaed-----	1,800	2.7
Little Club-----	900	1.3
Pacific Bluestem-----	3,800	5.6
Piloraw-----	5,500	8.1
<u>Hard-Red Winter Wheats</u>		
Turkey-----	10,000	14.8
Total all classes and varieties	67,600	100.0

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Agricultural Estimates
Division, State of Washington

In contrast to most other eastern Washington counties, wheat and other grains are grown in smaller fields and as a sideline or secondary crop. In the 1954 Census there were 30 growers who planted a total of 3,655 acres of winter wheat, giving an average of about 122 acres per farm. About 60 farms had a total of 1,830 acres of spring wheat, or about 30 acres to the farm.

Wheat is grown on the lower slope lands of Chelan County's three principal valleys. The Wenatchee Valley and the Columbia River benchlands at the mouth of the Wenatchee Valley led in 1954 wheat acreage with 2,240 acres. The Chelan Valley had 2,030 acres and the Entiat 240.

Barley is the second most important small grain grown commercially and for feed on general livestock farms. There has been a marked uptrend in barley acreage and production since a low of 20 acres and 400 bushels in 1945. This grain reached 900 acres and 15,300 bushels of production in the 1955 crop year. Barley recently has been planted on the acreage taken out of wheat to meet wheat acreage allotments in Chelan County. Barley is grown in small fields and is located on 25 to 30 farms. The Wenatchee Valley area had 260 acres in 1954, divided among 16 farms. In the Chelan Valley six farms grew a total of 150 and the Entiat had one ranch with 15 acres.

Oats, the third small grain crop has increased in acreage nearly four times since 1939. This grain, used primarily for local feed supplies, reached a peak of 620 acres in 1954 and a peak harvest of 16,800 bushels in 1953. In recent years oats have been raised for combining as grain on an average of 20 to 25 farms per year. Most of the threshed oats are sold locally to livestock farms. The 1954 oat crop was grown on 25 farms and the largest production was from the lower Wenatchee Valley where six growers had a total of 265 acres. The Chelan Valley was second with 160 acres on six farms.

Table 21.- Wheat and Barley: Acreage, Yield and Production
Chelan County, 1939-1955

Year	All Wheat			Barley		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	1,700	13.0	22,100	150	14.0	2,100
1940	1,500	18.0	27,000	320	15.0	4,800
1941	1,200	17.0	20,400	250	20.0	5,000
1942	700	17.0	11,900	700	23.0	16,100
1943	500	30.0	15,000	120	20.0	2,400
1944	1,140	18.6	21,200	40	15.0	600
1945	1,200	15.8	19,000	20	20.0	400
1946	1,200	20.8	25,000	30	20.0	600
1947	3,000	12.3	36,900	100	16.0	1,600
1948	4,700	18.7	87,900	150	18.0	2,700
1949	6,000	13.1	78,400	200	16.0	3,200
1950	6,000	20.0	120,000	200	19.0	3,800
1951	6,300	18.1	114,300	150	22.0	3,300
1952	6,800	14.1	95,900	300	24.0	7,200
1953	7,200	20.2	145,600	330	30.0	9,900
1954	4,750	24.3	115,550	600	19.0	11,400
1955	3,900	17.3	67,600	900	17.0	15,300

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Agric. Estimates Division
State of WashingtonTable 22.- Spring Wheat and Winter Wheat
Chelan County, 1939-1955

Year	Spring Wheat			Winter Wheat		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	800	11.9	9,500	900	14.0	12,600
1940	500	10.0	5,000	1,000	22.0	22,000
1941	400	11.0	4,400	800	20.0	16,000
1942	300	20.3	6,100	400	14.5	5,800
1943	---	---	---	500	30.0	15,000
1944	1,000	18.6	18,600	140	16.7	2,340
1945	1,300	15.0	19,500	300	20.0	6,000
1946	2,000	21.5	43,000	400	24.0	9,600
1947	2,700	32.0	86,400	300	15.0	4,500
1948	2,100	15.0	31,500	2,600	21.7	56,400
1949	3,100	9.4	29,100	2,900	17.0	49,300
1950	4,500	20.0	90,000	1,500	20.0	30,000
1951	3,600	13.0	46,800	2,700	25.0	67,500
1952	3,700	10.0	37,000	3,100	19.0	58,900
1953	4,000	18.0	72,000	3,200	23.0	73,600
1954	1,900	17.0	32,300	2,900	28.0	81,200
1955	1,600	13.5	21,600	2,300	20.0	46,000

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Agric. Estimates Division
State of Washington

Table 23.- Oats and Rye: Acreage, Yield and Production
Chelan County, 1939-1955.

Year	Oats (for grain)			Rye (for grain)		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	150	34.0	5,100	40	8.5	340
1940	200	28.0	5,600	40	11.0	440
1941	180	35.0	6,300	40	13.5	540
1942	300	29.0	8,700	60	23.0	1,380
1943	220	26.5	5,830	30	13.0	390
1944	170	11.0	1,870	10	11.0	110
1945	160	26.0	4,160	10	10.0	100
1946	170	28.0	4,760	10	8.0	80
1947	150	31.0	4,650	50	6.0	300
1948	220	24.0	5,280	70	9.0	630
1949	180	24.0	4,320	90	6.0	540
1950	210	27.0	5,670	70	7.0	490
1951	250	29.0	7,250	30	12.0	360
1952	250	24.8	6,200	20	10.0	200
1953	560	28.0	15,700	--	--	--
1954	620	27.0	16,760	--	--	--
1955	490	33.1	16,200	20	8.0	160

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Agric. Estimates Division
State of Washington

Rye, which was formerly important as a pioneer feed grain crop, has been a minor crop in the last 15 years, growing on only a few farms. It reached higher-than-average acreages of 70 to 90 acres in the 1948-1950 period.

Field Corn

Field corn for grains has dropped considerably below the production of the World War II years. A decrease in hog numbers and a decline in feeding of cracked corn to cattle have been two factors in the decline. Another has been an increasing practice of cutting field corn in the green stage for silage. Field corn harvested for grain was only 10 acres found on three farms in the 1954 Census. In the same year two farms reported a total of 22 acres cut for silage. This was far below the volume in 1944 when 240 acres were harvested for grain on over 30 farms and 386 acres were cut for silage fodder.

Potatoes

Potatoes for commercial sale or home use show a marked decline in recent censuses. In 1939 about 200 farms planted a total of 180 acres of potatoes and harvested 7,450 sacks. By 1954 the Census found 244 farms growing only a total of 20 acres and harvesting 2,420 sacks. The large number of farms reporting potatoes indicates most of the crop was grown in kitchen gardens for home use or cattle feed. In most years there is little or no commercial potato growing. Potatoes are imported and most Chelan farmers buy their potato supplies from city markets.

Table 24.- Field Corn and Potatoes: Acreage, Yield and Production
Chelan County, 1939-1955

Year	Field Corn (for grain)			Acreage (acres)	Potatoes 1/	
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)		Yield (100-lb. bags per acre)	Production (100-lb bags)
1939	180	16.0	2,830	180	42	7,450
1940	160	31.2	5,000	---	---	---
1941	160	25.4	4,060	---	---	---
1942	210	24.0	5,030	---	---	---
1943	190	19.0	3,610	---	---	---
1944	240	29.0	6,960	150	75	10,670
1945	180	33.9	6,100	---	00	---
1946	140	36.4	5,100	---	---	---
1947	100	36.0	3,600	---	---	---
1948	50	34.0	1,700	---	---	---
1949	100	24.0	2,400	60	86	5,190
1950	70	32.9	2,300	---	---	---
1951	50	24.4	1,220	---	---	---
1952	30	38.0	1,140	---	---	---
1953	20	34.0	680	---	---	---
1954	10	33.0	330	20	141	2,420
1955	10	40.0	400	---	---	---

1/ There are no data available for intercensal years on potatoes.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Hay and Silage

Forage crops of alfalfa, timothy and clover, and other hay and silage are an important part of Chelan livestock farming. These crops for local use and some cash sales have not changed greatly in acreage over the last 15 years. There have been only slight decreases in legume and grasshay and a small increase in alfalfa. Most production has been on general and livestock farms to support the livestock population which includes nearly 9,000 head of cattle, 2,800 sheep, and 1,000 horses. All hay and silage crops have taken up 6,300 to 6,665 acres in recent crop years.

Alfalfa is the most important forage crop. About 330 farms have been growing alfalfa recently, the crop ranging from 3,800 acres in 1946 to a peak of 6,100 acres in 1941. Total production reached a peak of 14,800 tons in 1943 and was at a low of 5,300 tons in 1951. Most alfalfa is grown on irrigated farms and is generally in the lower, level valley floor lands. Areas of heaviest production are in the middle and upper Wenatchee Valley and the Chelan-Manson area. About 60 farms made commercial sales totaling 1,645 tons of alfalfa to local and western Washington markets in 1954.

Oats and other small grains cut for hay and straw are the second most important hay forages. Grain hay has been cut from 2,000 to 1,000 acres

annually on 90 to 140 farms. Sales are quite small and, with exception of 250 tons, the crop is consumed directly on the Chelan farms growing it.

Clover and timothy, wild hay and various grasses and legumes cut for silage, round out the forage crops. Clover and timothy is limited to about 20 farms and averages about 350 acres annually. Clover and mixed grasses are most common in the wetter and cooler upper Wenatchee Valley. Less than 20 farms harvest wild hay from a total of about 250 acres annually. Clover and wild hay have been declining in importance as alfalfa and silage cuttings increase. In 1954 there was an indicated increase in the processing of grasses, alfalfa, clover and small grains for silage. Silage reached a new peak harvest of 1,030 tons cut from 140 acres distributed over 7 farms,

Table 25.- Clover-Timothy Hay and Alfalfa Hay
Acreage, Yield and Production
Chelan County, 1939-1955.

Year	Clover and Timothy Hay			Alfalfa Hay		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (tons per acre)	Production (tons)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (tons per acre)	Production (tons)
1939	610	1.1	700	4,100	2.0	8,200
1940	540	.6	350	5,000	2.1	10,500
1941	650	1.9	1,210	6,100	2.4	14,600
1942	770	.6	480	5,800	2.2	12,800
1943	880	1.1	980	5,300	2.8	14,800
1944	800	1.2	970	4,700	2.0	9,400
1945	720	1.2	860	4,300	2.0	8,600
1946	600	1.3	760	3,800	2.2	8,400
1947	530	1.3	700	3,900	2.1	8,300
1948	420	1.5	630	3,600	2.4	8,600
1949	370	1.3	470	4,200	1.9	8,000
1950	400	3.1	1,230	4,500	2.5	11,300
1951	390	2.9	1,130	4,800	1.1	5,300
1952	380	2.5	940	5,100	1.3	6,700
1953	360	2.3	830	4,700	2.1	10,000
1954	340	1.2	400	4,300	2.4	10,400
1955	360	1.7	620	4,400	2.7	11,800

Source: U.S. Dept. of Agric., AMS, Estimates
Division, State of Washington.

Vegetables

With most of its best irrigated land in tree fruits and forage crops, Chelan County agriculture is characterized by a small and declining production of vegetables. Distance from large urban markets, the choice of most farmers to specialize in fruit, and colder climatic conditions are major explanations for this pattern of crops. In 1954, there were only 18 commercial vegetable farms and they were operating on a small scale with a total growing area of about 10 acres. About five years earlier there were 30 growers with a total crop of 20 acres. Vegetable growing for home use, or the practice of keeping

kitchen gardens, was found on 1,215 farms in 1949 and on only 987 in 1954. The leading vegetables harvested for the commercial market in the 1954 crop year were sweet corn (4 acres), tomatoes (3), asparagus (1) and only fractions of acres of green beans, onions, cucumbers and peas. Commercial outlets were mainly the fresh retail market in Wenatchee, Chelan and other local towns. Vegetables are heavily imported from the Yakima Valley and the Quincy Basin.

Berries

Interest in berry growing has shown a declining trend in recent years. There were only 17 farms with a total of four acres enumerated in the 1954 Census. In the 1949 enumeration there were 11 acres distributed over 28 farms. Berries are grown on farms in fractions of acres primarily for local use and some local fresh market retailing. Less than 36,000 pounds of all berries are harvested which does not meet the consumer demand in Chelan County. The most common berries grown in farm gardens are raspberries (4 acres), strawberries (4), and boysenberries (1), and fractions of acres of gooseberries, blackberries and loganberries.

Nursery and Greenhouse Products

Chelan County has an important nursery industry which ranked 11th in the state in 1954, and has been as high as ninth in previous years. There are about 10 nurserymen and greenhouse operators and their combined sales have ranged between \$77,000 up to \$190,000 per year since 1949. Important products are fruit nursery trees and grafted whips for replanting or expanding apple, pear, cherry and other orchards. The industry is mainly centered at Wenatchee, where a large nursery company and some individual farms grow and wholesale nursery fruit trees, berry plants and vines as well as ornamental landscaping plants. Greenhouse space, increasing in Chelan County in recent years, amounts to about 114,000 square feet, sixth largest among Washington counties.

Table 26.- Horticultural Specialties: Nursery Products, Greenhouse Products, Flowers, Plants, Bulbs, Seeds, Mushrooms and other Special Plants.
Chelan County, 1939-1954.

Census Year	Nursery Products (shrubs, trees and ornamentals)		Flowers and flowering plants, bulbs and seeds; Vegetables, vegetable seeds, plants, mushrooms grown in fields & under glass for sale.		
	Acres Planted	Sales from Nurseries	Acres in open fields	Greenhouse space (square feet under glass)	Sales from farms during the year
1939	6	\$ 2,230	4	64,560	\$ 58,995
1944 1/	-	-	-	-	-
1949	5	\$29,315	6	96,940	\$161,350
1954	8	\$ 9,930	6	113,900	\$ 67,354

1/ No Census data are available for 1944.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.